

# Planning Our Future: Tag! You're IT!

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The theme of the 9th Annual San Diego Green Students Youth Forum was preparing for a future where the students will be the decision-makers. "Planning Our Future: Tag! You're It.", was a resounding success, with over eighty students in attendance. This year's forum highlighted academic and career opportunities in the environmental field for today's youth as they begin to think about their role as adults. High school students and a few devoted teachers from throughout San Diego County gathered for the event at the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park on Saturday, April 25, 2009, from 10:30 am-3:30 pm. Students received valuable first-hand information about what a "green" career is really like from a panel of three experienced professionals, heard about unique programs available for environmentally-conscious students at UCSD, and had the singular chance to discuss sustainability with San Diego Councilmember Todd Gloria and Chula Vista City Councilmember Steve Castaneda..

Students voted on what they perceived to be the greatest challenges and opportunities that they will be encountering in 2020, when they are the key decision-makers. The outcome of that vote is represented in Tables 1 and 2. It is clear that students were interested in both protecting our environment and in having a general population that is engaged, educated and involved. The greatest concerns were issues pertaining to potable water, diminishing natural resources, and apathy. They were hopeful about having a new generation of environmentally-conscious consumers, and expressed interest in increasing renewable energy production and exploring a shift towards zero-waste communities.

Highlights from the forum:

- San Diego Councilmember Todd Gloria and Chula Vista Councilmember Steve Castaneda discussed their priorities and the actions taken in their respective cities to "go green." They engaged in a lively discussion with students about some of the challenges and successes in the San Diego region. Stephen Heverly, representative for Councilmember Sherri Lightner, provided additional support for an engaged and environmentally aware community, and the benefits of communicating with the council members.
- Two attending students presented reports that they had prepared. Thomas Barry of Rancho Bernardo High School discussed: "Energy Today-- Its Potential for Tomorrow and Energy's Affect on Humanity and Our Environment." Matt Golembeski of Scripps Ranch High School took on the topic of "California Water Conservation and the Extinction of Potable Sources."
- Kristin Blackler, Sustainability Analyst with the Sustainability Solutions Institute at UCSD, highlighted the opportunities for students selecting their academic courses in college. She also identified a wealth of options available to students in a variety of academic programs, and discussed how the talents of many disparate fields of study can be combined to create environmentally-friendly products, technology and policy.
- Risa Baron, Energy Programs Supervisor with San Diego Gas & Electric, described her "green" job at SDG&E and the surprising opportunities she has had to create and support more environmentally-savvy businesses, as well as the work SDG&E has done with many local governments to increase energy efficiency.

- Jim Peugh, a retired physicist who is now the Conservation Chair at the San Diego Audubon Society, discussed the winding road that led him to his current role as an advocate for the protection of birds and other wildlife, and urged students to each find their own way to contribute to the greater good.
- Linda Giannelli Pratt described the opportunities and rewards of public service, and the many cutting edge programs in the City that have increased energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and climate protection.
- Students watched the IMAX film “Under the Sea” and visited all the exhibits at the Science Center, including “So WATT! An Illuminating Look at Energy” and “San Diego's Water: From Source to Tap.”

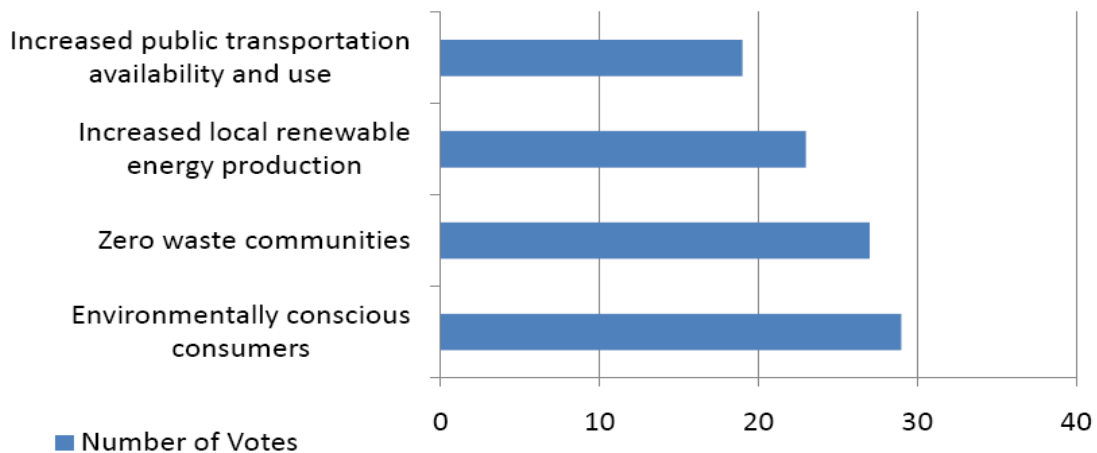
## Charts and Appendix

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### Data from student vote:

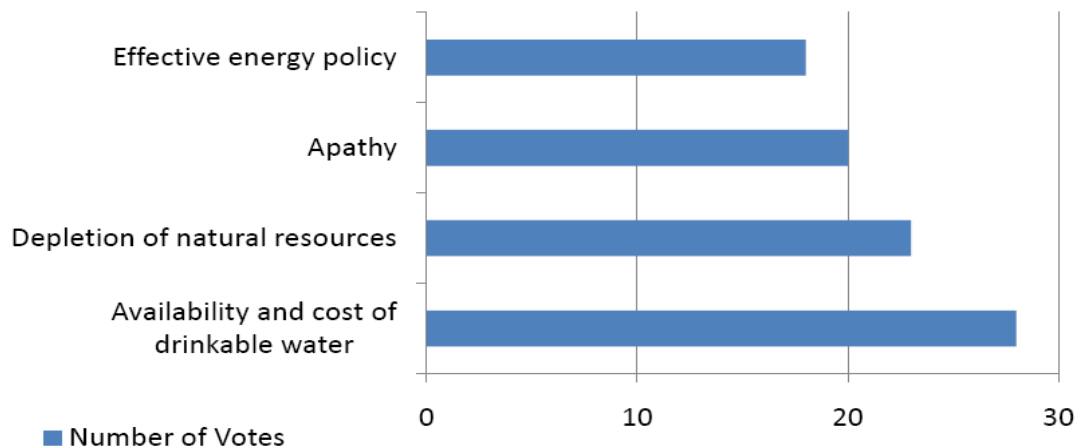
**Table 1**

#### Opportunities for 2010



**Table 2**

#### Challenges for 2010



# Charts and Appendix

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## Student demographic:

School represented	Number of students
Helix Charter High School	8
West Hills High School	8
Scripps Ranch High School	7
Westview High School	7
La Jolla High School	6
High Tech High	5
Grossmont High School	4
San Diego SCPA	3
Point Loma High School	2
San Diego Center for Children, Clark Center	2
Academy of Our Lady of Peace	1
Grossmont Middle College	1
Otay Ranch High School	1
Rancho Bernardo High School	1
Multiple Affiliations	1
Unknown	1